

of the Baltic, fell back upon Hamburg. General Carra St. Cyr and Baron Konning, the Prefect of Hamburg, used to go every evening to Altona.¹ The latter, worn out by anxiety and his unsettled state of life, lost his reason, and on his way to Hamburg, on the 5th of May, he attempted to cut his throat with a razor. His *valet de chambre* saved his life by rushing upon him- before he had time to execute his design. It was given out that he had broken a blood-vessel, and he was conveyed to Altona, where his wound was cured, and he subsequently recovered from his derangement. M. Koiming, who was a native of Holland, was a worthy man, but possessed no decision of character, and but little ability.

At this juncture exaggerated reports were circulated respecting the approach of the Eussian corps. A retreat was immediately ordered, and it was executed on the 12th of March. General Carra St. Cyr having no money for the troops, helped himself to 100,000 francs out of the municipal treasury. He left Hamburg at the head of the troops and the enrolled men of the custom-house service. He was escorted by the Burgher Guard, which protected him from the insults of the populace; and the good people of Hamburg never had any visitors of whom they were more happy to be rid.

This sudden retreat excited Napoleon's indignation. He accused General St. Cyr of pusillanimity, in an article inserted in the *Moniteur*, and afterwards copied by his order into all the journals. In fact, had General St. Cyr been better informed, or less easily alarmed, he might have kept Hamburg, and prevented its temporary occupation by the enemy, to dislodge whom it was necessary to besiege the city two months afterwards. St. Cyr had 3000 regular troops, and a considerable body of men in the custom-house service.

¹ The Prefect, Baron von Konning, had just before assured the Government that his department professed the greatest devotion for the Emperor. This practical commentary on his statement was too much for him, Puy-maigre (p. 148), who was on the spot, says that he attempted to hang himself, not to cut his throat, as Bourrienne says. "I was," continued Puymaigre, "surprised to see that later on he was one of the Ministers of Belgium. "What is more surprising is that he retained his high functions for several years." Puymaigre (p. 149) defends Carra St. Cyr, saying that having only 1200 or 1500 men the General could not have maintained himself in a large town in a state of insurrection.